

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt  
European Patent Office  
Office européen des brevets



(11)

**EP 0 705 572 B1**

(12)

**EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention  
of the grant of the patent:  
23.01.2002 Bulletin 2002/04

(51) Int Cl.7: **A61B 17/70**, A61B 17/80,  
A61B 17/86, F16B 25/00,  
F16B 5/02

(21) Application number: 95107363.4

(22) Date of filing: 16.05.1995

(54) **Locking plate and bone screw**

Befestigungsplatte und Knochenschraube

Plaque de fixation et vis à os

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
CH DE ES FR GB LI SE

(30) Priority: 03.10.1994 US 317246

(43) Date of publication of application:  
10.04.1996 Bulletin 1996/15

(73) Proprietor: Synthes AG, Chur  
7002 Chur (CH)

(72) Inventors:  
• Trebing, Linda  
Devon, Pennsylvania 19333 (US)

• Thalgott, John  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107 (US)

(74) Representative: Lusuardi, Werther Giovanni, Dr.  
Dr. Lusuardi AG, Kreuzbühlstrasse 8  
8008 Zürich (CH)

(56) References cited:  
EP-A- 0 077 681 EP-A- 0 424 734  
EP-A- 0 599 640 WO-A-89/09037  
WO-A-95/06439 WO-A-95/15727  
DE-A- 4 038 082 US-A- 3 861 269

Note: Within nine months from the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to the European patent granted. Notice of opposition shall be filed in a written reasoned statement. It shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

**EP 0 705 572 B1**

## Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a bone plate according to the preamble of claim 1.

[0002] In the treatment of various spinal conditions, including the treatment of fractures, tumors and degenerative conditions, it is necessary to secure and stabilize the anterior column of the spine following removal of a vertebral body or part.

Following such removal made using a thoracotomy, thoracoabdominal or retroperitoneal approach, the normal anatomy is reconstructed using tricortical iliac crest or fibular strut grafts. It is then necessary to secure and stabilize the graft, desirably in such a manner as to permit rapid mobilization of the patient. Such objectives can be accomplished by a bone plate. However, to accomplish this service in the optimum manner, it is necessary that the plate be reasonably congruent with the bone to which it is applied, that it have as low a profile as possible, that it be firmly secured to the spinal column so that it is not torn out when the patient places weight and stress upon it and that it be capable of placement and fixation in a manner that is convenient for surgeon.

[0003] In this context it is necessary to secure the plate to the spinal body and also, in some cases, to the graft. Conventionally, such attachment would be by the use of screws driven through screw holes in the plate into the bone. However, it is desirable in this instance not only to anchor the screw firmly in the spinal column in both the cortical and cancellous parts, but to have the screw firmly attached to the plate to prevent loosening of the screw/plate connection with changes in the bone.

[0004] From the EP-A-0599 640 a bone plate is known according to the preamble of claim 1 which has a continuous curvature.

[0005] From the DE-A-4038 082 a bone plate is known according to the preamble of claim 6 which is planar and whose plate holes are all provided with threads.

[0006] The invention seeks to provide a bone plate, particularly useful as an anterior thoracolumbar locking plate comprising a body made of physiologically acceptable material such as stainless steel, titanium or a titanium alloy.

[0007] In accordance with the invention, this object is accomplished by the features of the characteristic part of independent claims 1.

[0008] The invention will be further described with reference to the drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of a plate according to the invention;

Fig. 2 is a bottom plan view of a plate according to the invention;

Fig. 3 is vertical section along the line 3-3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a vertical section along the line 4-4 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a vertical section along the line 5-5 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary view in vertical section showing the profile of the hole 17 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 7 is a view in elevation of a bone screw according to the invention;

Fig. 8 is a fragmentary view in vertical section of a plate according to the invention secured in a bone by a bone screw according to the invention;

Fig. 9 is a schematic view showing the plate according to the invention secured to a spinal column with screws according to the invention; and

Fig. 10 is a view in side elevation of a drill guide for use with plates according to the invention.

[0009] Referring to Figs. 1-3, a plate according to the invention comprises a body 1 normally of a biocompatible metal, such as stainless steel, titanium or a titanium alloy, and has a bevelled, rounded periphery 2. The posterior edge 3 of the plate is slightly curved to follow the shape of the spinal column. The anterior edge 4 is tapered inwardly and has a notch 5 to facilitate handling the plate with a tool such as a forceps. As shown in Fig. 3, both edges are smoothly rounded.

[0010] As shown in Figs. 3-5, the plate transverse cross-section is curved to follow the bone surface. The upper plate surface 6 is bi-faceted or biplanar, with an anterior plane 7 and a posterior plane 8 meeting to form a central ridge 9, which, as shown in Fig. 1, extends down the long dimension of the plate. The bottom surface 10 of the plate, that intended for application to the bone, is, as indicated in Figs. 2-5, a smooth, curved surface, preferably cylindrical.

[0011] The plate is provided with a plurality of threaded screw holes 11-15, five in the example shown in Figs. 1 and 2, for locking screws. All are chamfered at the upper surface of the plate. Screw hole 11 is centrally located. Screw holes 12 and 13 are located at the extreme ends of the plate on the posterior side and screw holes 14 and 15 are positioned at the ends of notch 5, on the anterior side.

[0012] The axes of screw holes 14 and 15 are normal to the anterior plane 7 of the plate and the axes of holes 12 and 13 are normal to the posterior plane 8. Thus, the axes of adjacent holes 12 and 15, and 13 and 14, are inclined to one another or skewed at an angle. This creates a conical bone plug, rendering the plate more difficult to dislodge under load.

Central hole 11 is drilled straight through the plate, i.e. its axis is normal to a plane A-A (Fig. 3) tangent to the cylindrical bottom surface of the plate at the mid-point of the plate.

[0013] It will be understood that the number of plate holes for locking screws may vary. In particular there

may be several holes, for example, three, like hole 11, down the middle of the plate. Such a plate is shown in Fig. 10.

In addition to the holes for locking screws, the plate is provided with two holes 16, 17 for temporary screws. As shown in Fig. 6, these holes 16 and 17 may be elongated with a camming surface 18 to enable the hole to be used to aid in compressing graft material. See Algöwer et al. Re. No. 31,628.

[0014] Plates according to the invention are preferably used with locking screws of the type illustrated in Figs. 7 and 8. Referring to those figures, in this aspect the invention comprises a screw with shaft 19 having a head 20 and a tip 21. The shaft 19 is threaded, the lower part 22 (i.e., the part nearest the tip) being provided with a one-start buttress thread 23 and the upper part 24 (the part nearest the head) being provided with a two-start machine screw thread 25. The threads are synchronized to produce a constant and continuous lead over the entire length of the screw. The pitch is constant over both threads in the sense that the axial movement for one rotation of the screw is the same for both threads. When used with the plate according to the invention, the internal thread of the plate holes 11-15 is a two-start thread selected to mate with the thread of the screw. Because the pitch is constant, the plate will remain in its original position on the bone and there is no tendency to strip the thread out of the bone as the screw is advanced through the plate holes.

[0015] As shown in Fig. 8, the length of the machine thread is sufficient to engage the cortex 26 of the bone, while the buttress thread engages cancellous bone 27. Preferably the major diameter of the cancellous bone thread, i.e. the buttress thread, is greater than the minimum diameter of the female thread in the plate so that the starting point of the machine thread of the screw is readily aligned with the thread of the plate.

[0016] The tip of the screw is conically pointed as at 28 and is provided with self-tapping flutes 29 (normally three in number). The bottom surface 30 of the screw head is preferably conical. The upper surface is preferably spherical and is provided with means such as hexagonal socket 31 for receiving a wrench or other tool. A typical use of the plate and screw according to the invention is illustrated in Fig. 9. As shown there a portion of the spinal column has been removed, a graft 37 inserted and a plate 38 according to the invention applied across the graft site to provide rigid fixation of the anterior spinal column.

[0017] Assuming the surgeon has chosen his approach, exposed the spinal column, decompressed the spinal end, and applied the graft material, a threaded drill guide is inserted into the threaded center hole 11' of the plate. The drill guide may be of any conventional design. A suitable form is shown in Fig. 10. It has an upper section 32 knurled to facilitate manipulation and having an inner socket 33 to receive a wrench or like tool. The lower section 34 has a tip 35 of reduced diam-

eter. The tip is threaded to engage with the internal threads of plate holes 11-15. A bore hole 36 runs through the guide for receiving a suitable drill (not shown).

5 With the drill guide inserted, the plate is positioned on the posterior quarter of the vertebral body using the drill guide as a handle and a forceps or plate holder. Care must be taken that all screws will be placed in the vertebral body. A lateral x-ray should be obtained to see that no screws violate the spinal canal.

10 Using a drill guide, for example, a guide of the design shown in Klaue Patent No. 4,493,317, holes are drilled through the temporary screw holes 16' and 17'. Temporary screws are then inserted and tightened. The temporary screws compress the graft site and anchor the plate firmly to the bone. The drill guide is then removed from the center hole 11', and drill guides are inserted in the posterior holes of the plate. Holes are then drilled through the posterior holes. Locking screws according to the invention are then inserted in the posterior holes. The temporary screws are then removed from holes 16' and 17'. Threaded drill guides are then inserted into the anterior holes, holes are drilled, the guides removed and screws according to the invention inserted.

15 25 If desired, additional locking screws may be inserted through the center plate hole or holes to secure the graft, using the procedure described above.

Although the use of the screw according to the invention has been described in connection with the specific plate of the invention, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that it may be used advantageously with various other implants having suitably threaded screw holes including, for example, anterior and posterior spinal plates and spinal rod connectors.

#### Claims

1. Bone plate comprising an upper surface (6) and a lower surface, the lower surface (10) being curved for application to a bone  
**characterized in that**  
 the upper surface (6) has two intersecting planes (7,8) meeting at a central ridge (9), in combination with at least one screw hole in each of the planes of said upper surface (6), said screw holes having axes relative to each other which are skewed.
2. Bone plate according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said screw holes are threaded.
3. Bone plate according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that**, it further comprises a first screw hole in said plate having an axis normal to one of said intersecting planes and a second screw hole in said plate having an axis normal to the other intersecting plane.

4. Bone plate according to claim 3, **characterized in that** it further comprises a third screw hole which is unthreaded and furnished with a camming surface.
5. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 to 4, **characterized in that** it further comprises a plurality of unthreaded screw holes.
6. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 to 5, **characterized in that** said threaded screw holes have axes normal to the plane on which they are located.
7. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 - 6, **characterized in that** said plate has an anterior edge and a posterior edge, said anterior edge having a notch for receiving a manipulation instrument.
8. Bone plate according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said anterior notch has screw holes at the ends of said notch and said posterior edge has screw holes at its ends.
9. Bone plate according to claim 8, **characterized in that** said screw holes are threaded.
10. Bone plate according to one of the claims 7 to 9, **characterized in that** said posterior edge is curved.
11. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 to 10, **characterized in that** it further includes a plurality of elongated screw holes having camming surfaces.
12. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 - 11, **characterized in that** it further comprises a plurality of locking screws, each of said screws having a section of single start buttress threads and a section of two-start machine threads the lead being continuous over said two sections.
13. Bone plate according to claim 12, **characterized in that** the threads of said screws taken as a whole are of constant pitch and the lead being continuous over both threads.
14. Bone plate according to claim 12 or 13, **characterized in that** said screws have a pointed tip.
15. Bone plate according to claim 14, **characterized in that** said screws have cutting plates adjacent said tip.
16. Bone plate according to one of the claims 1 - 15, **characterized in that** it further comprises threaded screws for each of said screw holes and that each of said screws has a buttress thread for engagement with cancellous bone and a machine screw

thread for engagement with said screw holes and cortical bone.

#### 5 Patentansprüche

1. Knochenplatte mit einer Oberseite (6) und einer Unterseite (10), wobei die Unterseite (10) zwecks Anlage an einen Knochen gekrümmt ist, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Oberseite (6) über zwei sich schneidende Ebenen (7,8) verfügt, die einander in einem Mittelkamm (9) berühren, wobei in jeder der Ebenen der Oberseite (6) mindestens ein Schraubloch vorhanden ist und wobei diese Schraublöcher schräg aufeinander zulaufende Achsen haben.
2. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Schraublöcher mit einem Gewinde versehen sind.
3. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren ein darin ausgebildetes erstes Schraubloch umfasst, dessen Achse sich senkrecht zu einer der sich schneidenden Ebenen erstreckt, sowie ein darin ausgebildetes zweites Schraubloch, dessen Achse sich senkrecht zur anderen der sich schneidenden Ebenen erstreckt.
4. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 3, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren ein drittes Schraubloch umfasst, welches kein Gewinde aufweist und mit einer Eingriffsfläche versehen ist.
5. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren mehrere Schraublöcher ohne Gewinde umfasst.
6. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Schraublöcher mit Gewinde über Achsen verfügen, welche senkrecht zu der Ebene verlaufen, auf welcher die Löcher angeordnet sind.
7. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Platte eine Vorderkante und eine Hinterkante aufweist, wobei die Vorderkante über eine Kerbe zur Aufnahme eines Handhabungswerkzeugs verfügt.
8. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 7, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die vordere Kerbe an den Kerbenden Schraublöcher aufweist und die Hinterkante an ihren Enden Schraublöcher aufweist.
9. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 8, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Schraublöcher mit einem Ge-

winde versehen sind.

10. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 7 bis 9, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Hinterkante gekrümmt ist.
11. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren mehrere LangSchraublöcher mit Eingriffsflächen umfasst.
12. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 11, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren mehrere Befestigungsschrauben umfasst, wobei eine jede der Schrauben einen Abschnitt mit einem eingängigen Sägewinde und einen Abschnitt mit einem zweigängigen Maschinenschraubengewinde aufweist und die Gewindesteigung über beide Abschnitte hinweg kontinuierlich verläuft.
13. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 12, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Gewinde der Schrauben als ganzes genommen eine konstante Steigung aufweisen und die Ganghöhe über beide Gewinde hinweg kontinuierlich verläuft.
14. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 12 oder 13, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Schrauben ein spitzes Ende aufweisen.
15. Knochenplatte nach Anspruch 14, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Schrauben über in der Nähe der Spitzen angeordnete Schneidplatten verfügen.
16. Knochenplatte nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 15, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** sie des weiteren für jedes der Schraublöcher Gewindeschrauben umfasst und dass jede der Schrauben ein zum Eingriff mit Knochenspongiosa bestimmtes Sägewinde und ein zum Eingriff mit den Schraublöchern und mit kortikalem Knochen bestimmtes Maschinenschraubengewinde umfasst.

#### Revendications

1. Plaque pour os comprenant une surface supérieure (6) et une surface inférieure, la surface inférieure (10) étant incurvée en vue d'être appliquée sur un os, **caractérisée en ce que** la surface supérieure (6) présente deux plans (7, 8) qui se coupent mutuellement et qui se rencontrent en une arête centrale (9), en combinaison avec au moins un trou pour vis dans chacun des plans de ladite surface supérieure (6), lesdits trous pour vis présentant des axes qui sont inclinés l'un par rapport à l'autre.
2. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 1, **caractérisée en ce que** lesdits trous pour vis sont filetés.
3. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 1 ou 2, **caractérisée en ce qu'elle** comprend en outre un premier trou de vis dans ladite plaque, qui présente un axe perpendiculaire à l'un desdits plans qui se coupent mutuellement, et un deuxième trou pour vis dans ladite plaque, qui présente un axe perpendiculaire à l'autre plan qui s'intercepte.
4. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 3, **caractérisée en ce qu'elle** comprend en outre un troisième trou pour vis qui n'est pas fileté et qui est doté d'une surface de came.
5. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 4, **caractérisée en ce qu'elle** comprend en outre une pluralité de trous pour vis non filetés.
6. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 5, **caractérisée en ce que** lesdits trous pour vis filetés présentent des axes perpendiculaires au plan sur lequel ils sont situés.
7. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 6, **caractérisée en ce que** ladite plaque présente un bord antérieur et un bord postérieur, ledit bord antérieur présentant une entaille destinée à recevoir un instrument de manipulation.
8. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 7, **caractérisée en ce que** ladite entaille antérieure présente des trous pour vis aux extrémités de ladite entaille, et **en ce que** ledit bord postérieur présente des trous pour vis à ses extrémités.
9. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 8, **caractérisée en ce que** lesdits trous pour vis sont filetés.
10. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 7 à 9, **caractérisée en ce que** ledit bord postérieur est incurvé.
11. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 10, **caractérisée en ce qu'elle** comprend en outre une pluralité de trous pour vis allongées présentant des surfaces de came.
12. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 11, **caractérisée en ce qu'elle** comprend en outre une pluralité de vis de blocage, chacune desdites vis présentant une partie constituée de filets d'appui simples et une partie constituée de filets machine doubles, l'avance étant continue sur lesdites deux parties.
13. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 12, **caracté-**

risée en ce que les filets desdites vis pris globalement présentent un pas constant, et en ce que l'avance est continue sur les deux filets.

14. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 12 ou 13, caractérisée en ce que lesdites vis présentent une pointe. 5
15. Plaque pour os selon la revendication 14, caractérisée en ce que lesdites vis présentent des plaques de découpe en position adjacente à ladite pointe. 10
16. Plaque pour os selon l'une des revendications 1 à 15, caractérisée en ce qu'elle comprend en outre des vis filetées pour chacun desdits trous pour vis, et en ce que chacune desdites vis présente un filet d'appui destiné à être engagé dans l'os spongieux et un filet de vis machine destiné à être engagé dans lesdits trous pour vis et dans l'os cortical. 15

20

25

30

35

40

45

50

55

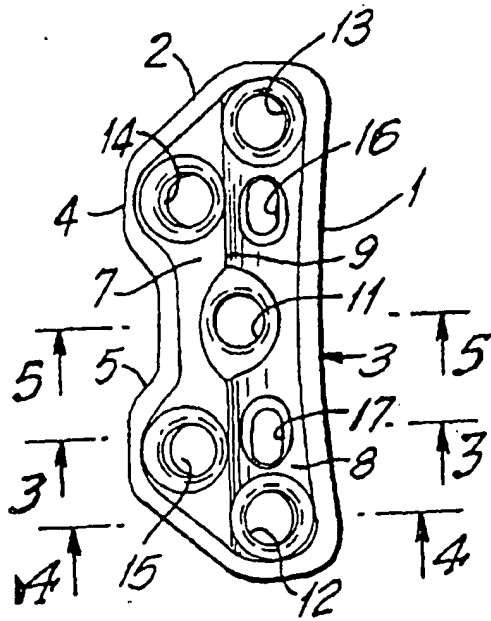


FIG. 1

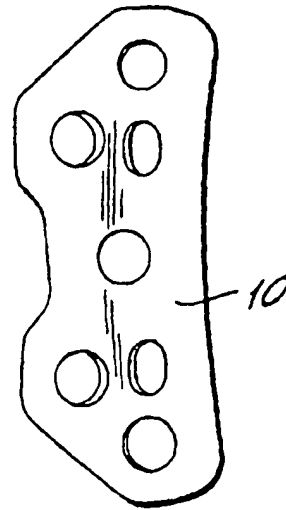


FIG. 2

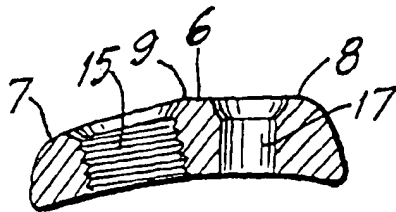


FIG. 3

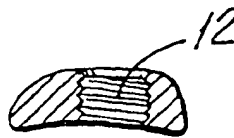


FIG. 4

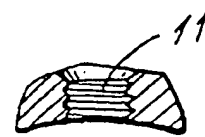


FIG. 5

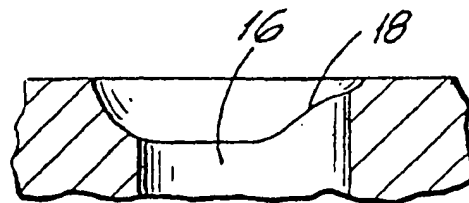
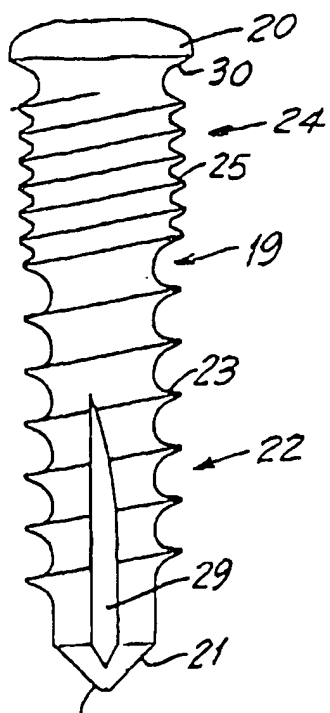


FIG. 6



28 FIG. 7

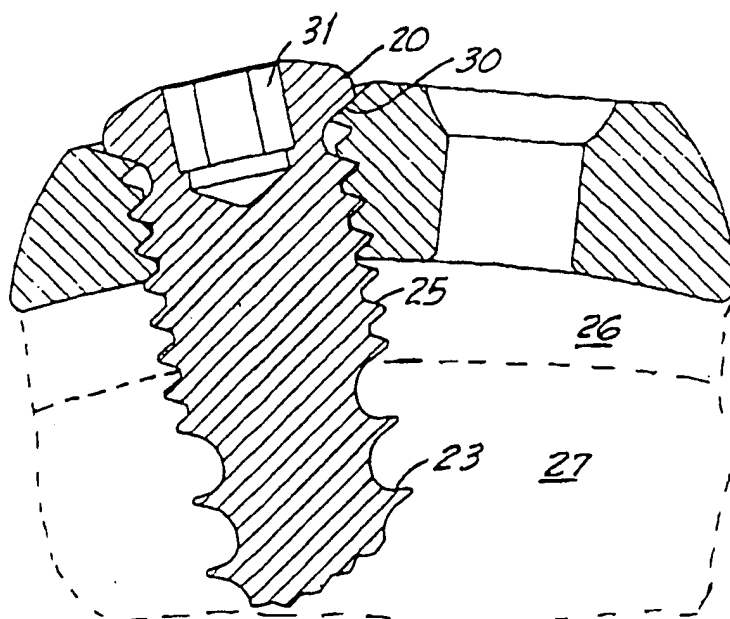


FIG. 8



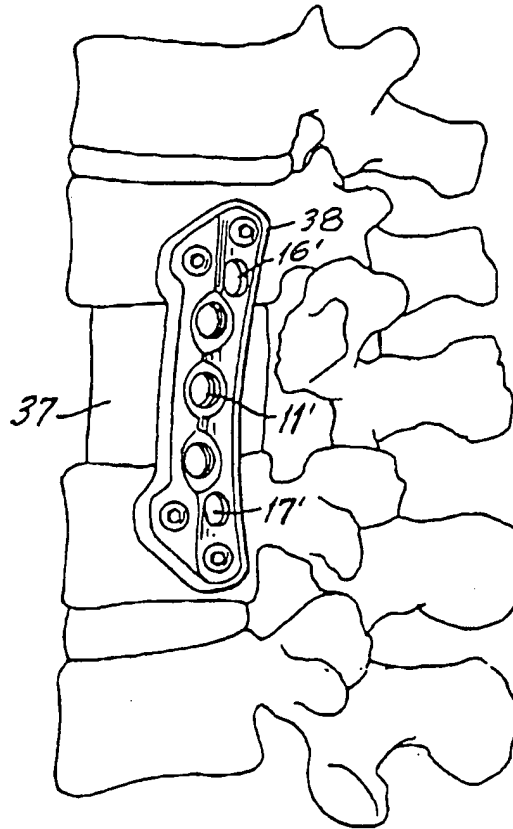


FIG. 9

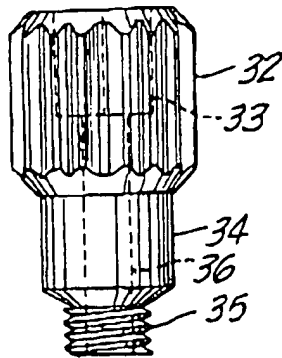


FIG. 10